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A RETURNE TO THE Miniſters OF LONDON;

By way of Anſwer to their *SEASONABLE EXHORTATIONS*, (ſo called) directed to their Congregations.

With ſober reproof ſent unto them, becauſe of their ſecret Smitings againſt the deſpiſed People called QUAKERS, whom they have ſecretly reproached in their ſaid EXHORTATION.

And this is written for the better information of them and their particular Congregations, and that truth may be exalted, and deceipt and iniquity may bow and tremble.

By E. B.

LONDON,
Printed for *Robert Wilſon*, at the *Black-Spread-Eagle* and *Windmill* in *Martins*, neer *Alderſgate*, 1660.

A RETURN TO THE Ministers OF LONDON;

By way of Answer to their SEASONABLE EXHORTATIONS, (so called) directed to their Congregation.

With sober reproof for unto them, because of their secret Smitings against the deluded People called QUAKERS, whom they have secretly reproached in their said EXHORTATION.

And this is written for the better information of them and their particular Congregations, and that truth may be exalted, and deceit and iniquity may bow and tremble.

By E. B.

LONDON,
Printed for Robert Wilson, at the Black-spread Eagle and Bridewell in Martin, near Ludgate, 1660.

A Return to the Ministers of *London*, by way of Answer to their *Seasonable Exhortation*, (so called) &c.

FOrasmuch as you the *Ministers* in and about *London*, have sent forth a Seasonable *Exhortation* (as you call it) to the people of your *Congregations*, which I have seen, read, and considered, and do find something therein worthy of Answer; for the end that people may be satisfied concerning things doubtful, which are in controversie this day among many; for it is well known the controversie hath been long, and is grown very high between us and you, concerning *Church*, *Ministry*, and *Religion*: And divers things in your *Exhortation* are doubtful unto many, and that all doubts may be removed, if possible, therefore I do return what follows as an answer unto you.

Whereas you say, you are not ignorant of the prejudices and preposisions, wherewith the carnal world is leavened, concerning your Calling, Office, and Doctrine, and what Lumours and Aspersions, abound for them every where, that plead Christs Cause in the Gates, &c.

Ans. As for your *Calling*, *Office*, and *Doctrine*, there is much to be said against them, in and by the Spirit of the Lord: for your *Calling* and *Office*, it is not according to the example of Scriptures, though the Calling and Office of Ministers of the Gospel hath example in the Scriptures; yet as you are called into your *Office*, that is not according, but rather contrary to the Scriptures: And as for your *Doctrine*, it is in some things unsound also. *Now as for Seasonable Exhortations of Ministers to people*, I do acknowledge that it is a duty which ought to be done, but how Seasonable you have been herein, I leave it to your selves and others to judge, and that remains to be tryed, and it is not only the carnal world,

as you speak, that are doubtful concerning your Calling and Office, but it is the best of the people, whose eyes the Lord is opening, to see and behold the false imitations of the *Calling* and *Office* of *Ministers*, as you have stood for many Generations. Now as to that, [illegible] Christs Cause, they are cryed out upon, and contended with, but this fully belongs not to you, though you apply it to your selves, but it pertains more to others, for she Prophesies well of you, as it use to do of false Prophets.

And you say, *We the Ministers of the Gospel in the City of London, do with earnestness exhort the people of this City to awaken out of sleep, and to lay to heart the great danger that we see you are in, which you represent under a threefold consideration.*

1. *The fear of the return of Popery.*
2. *The distracted state of Religion amongst us.*
3. *Other symptomes of Gods wrath hanging over your heads.*

Ans. That you are Ministers of the Gospel, this is doubtful unto many, and many more testimonies might be given to the contrary, than can be given for it. But this is not the present debate, and therefore no more of it.

And what, is the people of your Congregations yet asleep? Have not you awakened them in so many years time? Have you been preaching over them, and taking their money so long, and are they yet to awaken, as out of sleep? Will not the blame of this, and the condemnation of it fall upon you their Watchmen, who hath not yet awakened them? And may not they say that you have dealt unfaithfully by them, who are left as asleep under all your preaching, and are yet insensible of the danger that threatens them? Oh friends! will you consider, and your people with you, what you have been preaching, and what they have been hearing for so long a time, seeing you now acknowledge they are yet asleep, and unawakened.

Now as to the first of your considerations, *The fear of the return of Popery*, for which you lay down divers things to make the people believe it: *First*, The union of foreign Popish Powers. *Secondly*, The vast numbers (say you) of Popish Emissaries and Jesuites that swarm amongst you. *Thirdly*, The vending and printing of so many Popish Books every year, &c. *Ans.*

and Morally influencing them to their Duties, and teaching Justification by Inherent Righteousness, or professing [illegible] joyning in your Ordinances, and owning your Ministry, &c.

Now these things you call Calumnies, may truely plead against you, against your Church, Worship, Ministry and Profession, upon good grounds; and as for Justification by Inherent Righteousness, it is a Doctrine of the Church of Christ, that the Saints witnessed Christ, and his Righteousness within them, and that none are justified by any righteousness without them, but who witness Christ revealed in them, for all are reprobates that do not witness Christ in them, 2 Cor. 13. 5. And as for perfection, that is the doctrine of the Gospel, and of Christ, for the Apostle spake wisdome to them that were perfect, 1 Cor. 2. 6. and Christ commanded them to be perfect, Matth. 5. who never commanded impossibilities. You might better have charged these doctrines upon the Apostles, than upon the Papists; and as for joyning to your Ordinances, there is many that fears God, who are not Papists, that for good conscience sake cannot joyn to your Ordinances, nor own your Ministry, neither in its Call, Practise, nor Maintenance: and if these things were in dispute, I should shew you, according to Scripture, that it is not lawful for the Saints of God, to joyn themselves to your Ordinances, nor own your Ministry, but it is lawful for them both to deny your Ordinances and Ministry in their present standing, and to for printing and reading so many Popish books as you say, oh it had been your wisdome to have mentioned the books by name, that all might have known which were Popish books, but because your Charge is general, I cannot answer particularly, either to clear, or condemn, except you had mentioned in particular, which you ought to have done rather, than to have thundered in the dark, as you have done.

Your fourth reason, whereby you would make your people believe, that there is fear of the increase of Popery, and that the whole body almost of Professors published by Sectaries, especially Quakers, and such as you say, have shewn a ready inclination with Papists in their opinions and love to them, you say I do not

Answ. As for the Quakers, who have long been opposed by Prisons, Goals, and Persecutions, and your carnal weapons,

and now also charge great things upon them, to make them odious to the people. Alas, do you not know that they are blessed of the Lord? Is there never a man among you fitly one Prophet so wise as *Balaam* was, he saw there was no inchantments against *Israel*, nor divination against *Jacob*, but contrariwise they have been blessed, and they do therein continue; all that you have called to be cursed, and all that you have spoken against them, and your words and works against them shall be your own burthen in the day of the Lord, and shall sink you into misery, who hath made the innocent people the people of your malice and fury, but God is with them, I need say nothing, and why have you not particularly informed what particular part of *Popery* they do publish? Why will you charge in secret, and prove nothing in particular? therefore I do charge you to mention what particular things they do publish which is *Popery*, and not the truths of the Gospel, and then you shall have a further answer.

Your fifth reason is, *Jesuitical designs, and you mention the Protestant Universities, and the impoverishing, and disgracing, and overthrowing a godly learned Ministry, &c.*

Answ. As for the *Universities*, thousands are satisfied concerning them, that they are of *Popish* institution, and are not the Fountains of Divinity, as they have been falsly called; for if it's possible I could give large testimonies of the wickedness of the educations which is there in those places, and how little good they learn, and how much evil, one you have laced the cause wrong, for the pinching down the *Universities* would rather seem to be the removing part of *Popery*, than to be the way to let in *Popery*: and as for a godly *Ministry*, that is truly *godly*, and truly *learned*, alas there is no fear of impoverishing, disgracing, and overthrowing of that, for that is always poor and low, and contemptible to the world, and so it must be; and it is *Antichrists Ministers* that fears to be made poor, and that their *tythes* and *stipends* should be made less; and it is they that fear to be overthrown, and not the *Ministers* of *Christ*, for the *Ministers* of *Christ* are out of all such fear, because their standing and falling depends not upon earthly powers, but are builded upon the Rock of Ages, and cannot be overthrown.

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Your fifth ground is, *Toleration for Popery is published, pleaded, and put in trust, &c.*

Answ. That Popery is idolatry, and the Church of Rome a false Church, that I have said, and I hope shall never renounce it, but shall always give testimony until death, against the Church of *Rome*; but I make bold to tell you plainly, it is not my judgement that the Papists ought to be burned for their Romish religion, or at a Jesuite be taken in *England*, I would have him gone, or at a Jesuite be taken in *England*, I would have him so tolerated, that he should not have his life taken away by inhumane cruelty, not for *Religions* sake, except something can be charged upon him, besides matters of his *Religion*, or conscience: This is my judgement, that both the Papists and you are *Antichristian*, (in this) in that you kill each other, when they take one of *your Ministers*, and you theirs, to destroy each other; this is not of God, but of the *Dragons* power in both, and there ought to be more toleration in both, that lives may be spared; and you ought to conquer with *Spiritual Weapons*, if that you have them, and not to kill and murther persons, but to judge *Spirits*: That is contrary to Scripture, and the *Apostles* example, to destroy mens lives for *Religion* sake: And why may not the *Papists* have toleration, in matters concerning God, as well as others? So those that plead for their toleration upon this account, that they may be converted from sin, and not destroyed in their sin, this is no error, that their lives may be spared, but to plead for their toleration, as the right of *Religion*, this is sin. And thus your fifth ground, wherefore you fear the return of *Popery*, is answered.

Now I come to the second consideration, which is, *The present distracted state of Religion, which you say is evidenced in divers particulars: First, your division in civil and spiritual things, so that the wonted love and communion in both duties, is interrupted, strangenesse and distances fomented, censures and hard opinions of each others entertained, &c.*

Answ. Here is your error, for true *Religion* is not distracted nor divided in it self, but it is one in unity and peace, and so are all they that are in it, their hearts being united by the Spirit of the Lord, in their Faith, Practise, and Worship, and in all things pertaining to their *Religion*; Its true, there is distraction

straction amongst all the *false Sects* and *Churches* upon the earth, and it must be so, *Babilon* is divided, and confounded in its self, and one part of it against another, so the distractions is among your selves; among *Papists*, *Prelates*, *Presbyters*, and the rest, tearing and rending one another about *Church-worship*, and *Religion*, all like *Wolves* in sheeps cloathing, biting one another, being divided in *civil* and *spiritual* things, one crying for *this*, and another for the *other way* of Government in *Church* and *State*, and you are out of the true love, and true communion in holy duties, and interrupts one another, and what one saith is *right*, another saith is *wrong*; and all this is in *Babilon*, among your selves, and none of it among them that are in the true *Religion*, and in true *Church-Union*, who are gathered by the Spirit of the Lord.

Your second *Evidence* of the distracted estate of *Religion* (as you say) *is the many horrid and hideous errors, which for some years past have abounded amongst us, against the Authority of Scriptures, the Diety of Christ, the Holy Ghost, Trinity of Persons, Immortality of Souls, Doctrines of Repentance, Humiliation, Sanctification, Resurrection from the Dead, the eternal recompence of Heaven and Hell; yea, divers Sects encreasing every day in number, power, and malice, and under the names of* Quakers, Ranters, Seekers, *&c. oppugning the received Doctrine, and unquestionable interest of Christ Jesus amongst us.*

Answ. That many horrid errors have abounded amongst you, that's very true, as in many particulars might be instanced: But why do you maliciously charge the *Quakers* with oppoling the interest of Christ Jesus? The Lord shall judge you in his day, when he makes it appear to all the world, that those whom you charge with the contrary, are the very friends of *Christs* interest, and have been patient sufferers for his Names sake, under the wickedness of your Generation; and as for the *Ranters*, *Seekers*, and others, whom you have reckoned up together with the *Quakers*, it is well known that we are in opposition in spirit unto all these, and have given large testimony in the fear of God against them, though it is certain, that there is many as upright and sincere men towards God amongst these *Sects* you have mentioned, as any of *your*

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Congregations; and though in some things they are condemnable, yet in some things they are as justifiable as you are, before the Lord: And what the *Seekers*, *Ranters*, *Familists*, and the rest mentioned by you do hold, as in these things you have charged them with, He leave that, for I am not now pleading their cause, but the Cause of God and his People, whom you in scorn call *Quakers*; and though you have joyned them in accusation with others, yet I must separate them from others in my Answer, and must tell you in the fear of the Lord, that you have belied them, and falsly accused them out of your malicious hearts, for they do not deny the Authority of the *Scriptures*, but gives that authority to them, which the Spirit of God that gave them forth have formerly given, neither do they deny the *Deity of Christ*, but do say, in him dwelleth the fulness of the *Godhead*, neither do they deny the *Holy Spirit*, nor the *Father*, *Son*, and *Spirit*, but say there are *three*, and these *three* are *one*, but as for your *Trinity* of persons, that is language besides the Scriptures, and we do affirm the Soul is *immortal*, and as for the Doctrines of *Repentance*, *Humiliation*, *Sanctification*, *Resurrection* from the dead, the eternal recompence of *Heaven* and *Hell*, these Doctrines are publickly held forth by them in words, and also in practise, more than by your selves; therefore with what face you could charge them with the denial of these things, it is almost wonderful; and there are thousands of your Congregations that are and have been sometimes hearing in your *City*, that shall bear witness against your accusations, and give evidence that they have heard them, whom you call *Quakers*, give faithful witness of, and for all these things which you charge them with denial of: Do you think that your *Congregations* are all so blind as to receive for truth what you herein have spoken, nay, I must tell you, some of them are offended with you because hereof.

First, in that you have reckoned the *Quakers* with *Ranters*, and others, between whom there is absolute opposition, and not agreement, neither in doctrine nor practise.

Secondly, That you should charge the *Quakers* with such things as they are altogether clear of, and known to be so by many;

but this is, that your folly and weakness might appear, and as you speak of encreasing every day in *number, power,* and *malice,* some part of this is true, for the Lord doth encrease his people daily in *number,* and *power,* by his *spirit,* but not in *malice,* and that is your torment, the encrease of the *Quakers,* which as they have begun to encrease, so the Lord will continue them, and you nor mortal men shall not be able to hinder, neither the Magistrates persecution, nor the Ministers instigation thereunto, though you have joyned hand in hand against them, for the Lord is with his people, and his authority and power is their defence, and they are not in empty formes (as you say) but in the power of Godliness; and as for your Ordinances and Ministry, of which you speak, something I have said to it already, and more I shall say hereafter.

Your third Evidence is, *the odious scandalls of those that professe themselves to be the people of God, as their self seeking, their unparalled breach of all civil and sacred oaths, whereby the mouth of iniquity is opened, and the reverence of religion abated, so that to us (say you) there appeares no visible way of repairing the credit of strict profession, but by a severe punishment of Professors, &c.*

Answ. It is true, many that do professe themselves the people of *God,* but are not, but by their lives and practises gives odious scandalls, and are self-seeking, as you say; but upon whom the guilt of this may truly be charged, that remains to be sought out, doubtlesse it lies as neer your doors as any others, for is not your pride and oppression by taking *tithes,* and suing people at law for wages, and casting them in prison, because for good conscience sake they cannot pay you, your seeking for your gain from your quarter, and your taking great sums of money, and preaching for hire, taking so much yearly, are not these odious scandalls, and very self-seeking practices which you are guilty of, while you pretend publique good? as for breaches of oaths and covenants, I will you to search your own hearts, for that iniquity doth lye as neer your generation as any others, wherein that you and your brethren have from time to time engaged to such and such things: as first, did not you engage for the government to be without *King,* and *House of Lords*? And did not you then cry up the

Protector, contrary to your engagements, and now cry up another: and thus it is very evident, that the guilt of breach of Oaths & Covenants, lies near unto your selves, which indeed opens the mouth of iniquity; for the very *Cavaliers* and *Prelates* say, you were once stirr'd in your way, but now you have struck hands with them, and are now your selves doing that which you cryed out against in them: And *thousands* in this Nation is abated in their affections from your *Church* and *Ministry*, as knowing them to be upon a false *Foundation*, and to be of *Babylon*, and not of the Heavenly *Jerusalem*: And what do you mean by severe punishment of professors? do you mean to set up *Ecclesiastical* lawes again, and that all must be forced to your *Church* way and Religion? is it in your hearts to drive the Nation by force, and if they will not, to punish them with fire, and faggot, and prisons? If this be your meaning, as may justly be supposed it is, the Lord deliver the Nation from you, this is not the way to gain the credit of *Religion*, but the further you go on in this way, as you have formerly walked in, the more will your *Profession* and *Religion* stink in the nostrils of all good men.

Your fourth Evidence is, *Immensity, & boundless liberty permitted, assumed, & freely practised by many, to write*, print *and* publish *all manner of* blasphemies *and* opinions, &c. *the sad and woful effects thereof appears in many, some being in Apostacy, others in luke-warmnesse, and much decay in the power of godlinesse*, &c.

Answ. As I have acknowledged there are without doubt many *errors*, *blasphemies*, and *false opinions* extant in this Nation, both written, published, and maintained, but upon whom, and what sort of men this can truly be charged, this is very doutful to many; and your charge being onely general, no particular answer can well be given, only it appears, you would have none to *write*, *print*, *and publish*, but your selves, or by your consent; and you would tye the *Nation* up in the bondage of your own *spirits*; and you would be the only Judges of *blasphemies* and *errors*; but that we allow not, for enemies must not be Judges, and it is very possible that such is your darknesse, that you may call truth error, and error truth in some particulars, but if you shall instance any particular.

ctular *Doctrines*, *Blasphemies*, *Errors*, and *Opinions*, published and maintained, in my next I shall freely give my witness against them, if they be really so, and against the people that holds them, as well as your selves, & more particularly I cannot now say; and there is indeed woeful and sad effects of *errors* brought forth in this *Nation*, and many are in the *Apostacy* from the truth, and in the *luke-warmness* also, and the power of *Godliness* is decayed, and they have the *Forme*, and holds that without the *Power*: your selves may do well, and your *Congregations* also, to search your own hearts, by the spirit of the Lord in this case, that the guilty may see, and turn unto the Lord, that his wrath come not upon them.

Your fift Evidence is, Sabbath Prophanation, *both in* Opinion *and* Practice, *grown to a greater height than ever formerly*; *the Jewes* Sabbath *cryed up*, *instead of the Christians* Shops *opened upon the* Lords day, *yea*, *some working the works of their* ordinary callings, *in knitting*, *and sowing of garments in our Assemblies*, *even in the Pulpits*, *in the time of Gods publike worship*, *&c.*

Answ. This remains doutful to many, what the true *Sabbath* is, and whether the Lord doth require of this *generation* the observing one day above another, and if so, what day it is that he requires the observing of; as for the 7th day of the week, we know that the Lord commanded the *Jewes* to keep as a *Sabbath*, and to rest, But that was never commanded to the *Gentiles*; and as for the first day of the week, which is called the Christians *Sabbath*, that is doubtful to many, whether God commands and requires the observation of that day by the gentile believers, yea, or nay; seeing that there is neither command nor binding example for it, through out the Scriptures, if there be any I do desire that you would shew it in your next; and by what authority, whether from men, or from Heaven, the first day of the week is now kept by you, as your *Sabbath*; for really many are doubtful in this case, and you would do very well, if you have a command from *God*, or *example* from his servants in former ages, to discover so much unto the people: And as for your calling it the *Lords day*, it is certaine every day is his, and not one day more then another; and

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is for *sheets* opening, and such things as you mention, though every one that do such things, may not be justified in the doing of it, yet such a thing in it self may be justified, if the spirit of the Lord moves unto it, and who shall hinder the Lord? And why may not others labour in their ordinary *callings* that day, as well as you in your ordinary *callings*? I mean, your ordinary *calling* of *preaching*; that it is an ordinary *calling*, it is certaine, because you deny any extraordinary *calling* in these dayes, and so I only query this, why others may not follow their ordinary *callings* as well as you? for it hath been affirmed very lately by some, that *preaching* was a trade, and a *function* for men to get a living by, and we do not question but there are many now in this Nation, called Ministers, that do *preach* for that end, and would cease to *preach*, if *money* and *tithes* were ceased to be given them: I speak this of some, not of all, which doth demonstrate that the way of your preaching, is an ordinary *calling*, which you labour in, on your *Sabbath day*.

Your sixth Evidence, *is the powring out by many of all sorts with a full mouth, all manner of obloquy and contempt upon* Ministry, *and* Ministers *of the Gospel, openly interrupting them in the excercise of their duty, whereby they are* discouraged *in their work, while they are represented under the notion of* Baals Priests, Gehazies, pulpited divines, *distributers of* Sundaies Doles, Simonions, Decimating Clergy, *common* Incendiaries, &c.

Answ. It is certain, that the true Ministry, and Ministers of the Gospel were in all ages and now are contemned and despised, and all manner of evill spoken against them for the name of Christ: But whether you are those true *Ministers* of the Gospel, and your *Ministry* the true *Ministry* sent of Christ, this is doubtful to many; and by many particulars which might be instanced, the contrary doth appear: The *Ministers* of Christ in the dales of the *Apostles*, they never complained of being *interrupted*, for they were haled before *Rulers*, and commanded to preach no more in that name, and yet they were not discouraged thereby in their work, nor when they were called *movers* of sedition, and deceivers, and such reproachful

proachful names, they regarded not these things, but as for you, you seem to be troubled that any should speak to you, or ask you a question, or exhort you to repent, if any out of good conscience query with you, concerning your *practise* and *Doctrine*, and if any exhort to good, and cry against evil amongst you, this you call interrupting of you, in your *Ministerial* duty, and to *prison*, houses of *Correction*, and to *Whips* and *Stocks*, must such go, which was never the *Apostles* practise, never was any sent to *prison* for opposing of them; and what if the Ministers of *England* be called *Hirelings*, and false *Prophets*, and greedy *dumb dogs*, the practise of some of them doth prove it that they are so; these things you must bear, as coming deservedly, and not unjustly upon you, for the servants of the Lord in all Ages ever cried against *deceivers*, and false *Prophets*, and called them *deceivers*, and *greedy dumb dogs*, and *Serpents*, and *vipers*, and evil beasts, and slow bellies; these names and terms did *Christ*, the *Apostles*, and *Prophets*, use unto such as are some of the *Ministery* of this *Nation*, and not with revilings and reproachings, but with the Spirit of Authority from God, that reproves the wickedness of *Prophets*, *Teachers*, and people; and tell me, have not some of you sued men at the *Law*, and cast them into prison in this *City*, because they would not give you *money*, and *tythes*, and *hire*, though such as have not heard you, nor received you as *Ministers*, nor received any thing from you, and such as you did never any work for, have you sought wages from, and caused them to be *imprisoned*, that would not give you? And tell me in good earnest, can any less be said of such who thus walk, but that they are *insatiable hirelings*, and as bad as *Baals Priests*, and even *cheaters*, and *greedy dumb dogs*, let the Witness in your own consciences answer, and you shall have a reply.

Now I come to your third *particular*, which is *other causes and symptomes of Gods wrath hanging over your heads, the frequent disappointment from time to time, of all hopes of coming to any settlement in Government in the Nation, occasioned by strange confusions, which is a clear evidence that God hath in displeasure darkened our eyes, and bid counsel from us* (say you.)

Answ. It is very true, that from time to time of late dayes the

the Lord hath disappointed the purposes of men, even concerning settling of *Government*, and there hath been almost strange confusions in changes, but to what can this be attributed? Have not your sins been as great a cause of it as any others? And have not you and your Generation been the Councellors in all these matters? Was not some of you or your Brethren in *Olivers* daies, and in *Richards* daies, and in the Armies daies, and in the Parliaments daies, and are not you and your Brethren busie at this day in ordering a settlement of Government in this Nation? But the Lord hath hitherto disappointed *you* and them, that *you have counselled*, and broken you into confusion and distraction, and turned backwards even the proceedings of *Rulers*, and *Teachers*, and the spirit of deep *sleep* and of *slumber* is powred upon you all, and the *vision* of these things is as a sealed book unto you, even because of God's displeasure against you; and in that you say, *your eyes are darkned, and counsel is hid from you*, in that you say true, though to your own shame: And what trust can be put in such *Watchmen*? What confidence can be placed by your people in you? when as you acknowledge that your eyes are darkned, and counsel is hid from you; the Scriptures mentioned by you doth prove there was darkness upon the Land, but *Isaiah* doth not say, nor *David*, that counsel was hid from them, or that their eyes were darkned, neither did ever the *Apostles* say so, but witnessed that the Lord was their light, and in him their eyes were opened, and counsel was revealed to them.

Secondly, You say, *This sadly presages of* unchurching *the Nation, or the* departing *of the glory of God from you.*

Answ. By *unchurching* the Nation, I suppose you mean making the *Church* no *Church*, which if this can be done, then the Gates of hell may prevail against the *Church*, contrary to the words of *Christ*, who said, the Gates of Hell should not prevail; but I must tell you, the Nation of *England*, as to the general part of it, hath been long, and yet is *unchurched*, that is, ungathered by the Eternal Spirit, into the true fellowship in the Body of *Christ*, for the night of *Apostacy* and *Darkness* hath been over the world, since the *Apostles* daies, and over this Nation in particular, and your *Churches* hath been no true

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Churches, nor the people under your *Ministry* truly joyned and united in true *Church* Order, and under true *Church* Government, though I do not say but that there are thousands of sincere people that loves the Lord, yet remaining among you, and the day of the Lord is appearing, which will confound the Whore, the *false Church*, which hath been set up in this Nation, and through the world, and Assemblies which hath had the name of the *Churches* of Christ, will be found to be otherwise in the Judgement of the Lord, and all the false *Ordinances*, Practises, and Ministers, must be thrown down, that the glory of the Lord may again appear.

Further you seem, *to charge your selves with leaving your first love, and former zeal, for the truth and worship of God, but the present coldness and indifferency in the things of God, together with your barrenness and unanswerable walking to the Gospel of Christ, &c.* (say you.)

Answ. Though to your own shame, yet I do believe this is truly acknowledged, that you have lost your *first love* and *zeal*, which once was in you, in the daies when you were persecuted under the Bishops, you were full of *love* and *zeal* for the *truth*, and *worship* of God, according as it was made manifest, and then you were sufferers your selves, but now you are *censurers* of others to *suffer*, and there is indeed much *coldness*, and *dryness*, and *barrenness*, amongst *you* and *your* people; I do truly desire you may repent you thereof, that if so be the Lord may heal you; and your walking indeed is *unanswerable* to the Gospel of *Christ*, (to wit) your taking of *tythes*, and so much *by the year* for preaching; and *saint* people at the Law that will not give you wages, though you do no work for them; these, with many other things which you practise, is an *unanswerable* walking to the Gospel of *Christ*, and seeing you have confessed your sins in some measure, repent and sin no more, that your iniquities may be blotted out.

Again, *you complain of the prevalency of Atheisme, and doting upon errors, endless separations, common ignorance, unbelief, profaneness, the prejudice against wholsome doctrine, and all order of discipline in the Church, and many other confusions are upon us,* (say you.)

Answ. Alas! So it is, but where is the blame? Oh you Watchmen! Should not you have better preserved your flocks? Should not you have fed them with living food? Should not you have been examples of righteousness and truth unto them? And should not you have nourished them with knowledge and understanding? But because the *Shepherds* have been *lazy* and *idle*, and feed themselves, and not their *flocks*; But the *Shepherds* have ruled over their flocks with force and cruelty, and their *Ministry* and *Preaching* hath been a very burden and oppression upon the people, and therefore is it that their *flocks* are *divided* into many Sects and separations, and great confusion is in your Assemblies, and among you, even the sin of the people in some measure, will be charged upon you their *Teachers*, whole flocks are run into *errors*, and *blindness*, and despise wholesome doctrine, and are out of true order, and Church-discipline, even in the traditions of men: Therefore oh that you *Ministers* would consider! and that you would learn more wisdome, and that your people would come to receive the Spirit of the Lord into their hearts, whereby they may be led into all truth, and into the Covenant of God, where there is no *unbelief*, *ignorance*, *prophaneness*, nor confusion; but *peace*, *love*, and *unity* altogether; and if you and they did come into this, you might be happy, and the judgments of the Lord would be removed.

Now I come to some particulars which you do promise for your selves: First, *That you will use all holy endeavours to keep God and his Truth among you.* Secondly, *That you will be more diligent in watching over your flocks.* Thirdly, *That you will endeavour the establishment of your Congregations against Popish Recusants.*

To all which I answer: You must first make clean your own hearts, and you must first repent of your own iniquities, before you can heal others; and you must first learn obedience to God in your own hearts, before you can truly instruct others therein: And indeed there is need enough for you to mourn before the Lord, and to fast, and to confess your sins, (as you say) for the Lord has been long departed from you, and his presence from your *Assemblies*, and that is the cause of their

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selfe, and drinesse, and *barrennesse* among the people, because Gods presence is wanting among you; and you had indeed need to be more diligent in watching over your flocks, for you have been negligent therein, and have fed your selves, and not them, and you have sought *theirs*, and not *them*, its plain by evidence, and it is time for you now to amend, and to put away the evil of your doings, but first before you discover the word to others, you must feel the word in your own hearts, to be as a *fire* and as a *hammer* in you, and you must know another *Foundation* for *Ministers* than you have long stood upon, even the *Lord Jesus Christ* must be your *Foundation*, and you must cease to *preach* for *hire*, and to *divine* for *money*, and then should it be better with you, and your flocks would have comfort in you, if you had received freely from the Lord, and ministred freely to them; but while you do it for ends to your selves, they can have no good hopes nor confidence in you.

And whereas you exhort your *Congregations* in divers particulars: *First, to take heed of false teachers, trying their spirits, and holding fast that which is good, especially to beware of Popish insinuations.* (say you, &c.)

Ans. Your Exhortation is good in it self, but you should have demonstrated more plainly how *false teachers* should be known, comparing their fruits *now*, with what they were in the daies of *old*, when the Scriptures were written, and that had been a good way to have discovered *false teachers*, that fifteenth of *Matthew*, mentioned by you, bids them beware of the leaven of the *Pharisees*, and Christ said, *they were such as were called of men Master*, stood praying in the *Synagogues*, loved uppermost rooms at *feasts*, went in *long robes*, and of such Christ bids beware, and of such now the people in *London* are to beware, where ever they are, for such as do these things, are in the steps of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, which Christ cried *Woe* against, and the true Prophets cried against such in their daies as preached for hire, and that sought for their gain from their quarter, and such you ought to cry against now, as seek for their gain from their quarter, except the guilt of these things in your selves stops your mouths from crying against them in others, and the *Apostles* cried against such as went for gifts, and rewards, such as taught

for *filthy lucre*, and such as made *merchandize* of people for gain for themselves, such the *Apostles* and *Christ* declared against, and such you ought to declare against; but the people of your *Congregations* may say, who are such now? and where are they? that I leave to their consciences to judge who it is, and where they are now, and whether there be any of them in this City now, and in the Nation, that are called of men *Master*, and love uppermost *rooms* at *feasts*, and that preacheth for *hire*, and money, for gifts, and rewards, seeks for their gain from their *quarter*, teacheth for *filthy lucre*, and gain; who are found in these things now, such are *false teachers*, who ought to be taken heed of: I shall not now say it is any of you, but I shall leave it to *you*, and to *your peoples* consciences, to whom your *Exhortation* is; and as I have said before, let all *Popish inventions* and *Popery* be first cast out of this Nation, and then if you joyn with us against it, through the Spirit of the Lord we will endeavour the keeping of it out, and that it shall no more enter in amongst us into this Nation.

And you say, *that your knowledge here, and all other graces here, are imperfect*; to which I say, then you are imperfect *Saints*, imperfect *Ministers*. But what do you mean by here? I suppose that you mean upon earth, now there are none of the *Graces of God that are imperfect*, but the Grace of God is perfect in it self, *and the Spirit of God is perfect, and every gift of God is perfect*; as saith the Scriptures. Now that you should say the *Graces of God are imperfect*, this is *error*, even abominable *error*, and you shew *unsoundnesse* in Judgement, even in the things of God, and hath belied the *Graces* and *Gifts* of God, which in their least measure are *perfect*. And thus I have looked over your *Exhortation*, and thus I have returned to you again, not but that I know it is the duty of *Christs Ministers* to exhort their flocks, and that exhortation in it self is good, but when I find where lies and false accusations are against the *Quakers*, whom I dearly love and own, upon that account, and not otherwise have I engaged with you, and what I have done, it is not rendering *evil* for *evil*, but rather to reprove your evil, and to undeceive your *Congregations*, who might otherwise take all for true that you have said, if it were not reproved.

Again,

Again, you exhort your Congregations, *that they manifest sincerity, not only by hatred of error, but by a love of the truth, &c.*

Answ. Sincerity of heart is indeed precious, especially where the Spirit of the Lord is the rule of Judgement, and doth manage that sincerity; but where a false spirit rules in the judgement, the sincerity is often betrayed into a zeal against the truth, and against the wayes of the Lord, rather than otherwise; and thus it was with the *Jewes*, whose sincerity (through their error of judgement) was turned into *zeal* and *bitternesse* against *Christ*: And thus it is to be feared it is with many in your *Congregations*, who may have a *zeal* without *knowledge*, and be short of true discerning between what is *truth*, and what is *error*, I speak not this of all, but of some, for its no small thing to discern between *truth* and *error*, especially in this day, wherein there are so many wayes and professions of *Church-Ministry*, and *Worship*, and yet all professing the *Scriptures* are their Rule of *Faith*, *worship*, and *profesſe*; and seeing that all *Sects* do professe proof from Scripture for what they hold forth, what ground have the people to believe you more than others, or others more than you? for where people receives *Doctrine* or *Religion* by report from others, without the *evidence* of the Spirit of God in their own hearts, this is not receiving of the truth unto eternal life; wherefore I exhort your *Congregations*, that every one amongst them may wait upon the Lord, to have a feeling and discerning in their own hearts, and that each one may be led and taught of the Spirit of God which leads into all truth, that they may deny all false *Ministers*, and false *worships*, and may worship God in Spirit and Truth, through the ministration of his own *Spirit* in their *hearts* and *consciences*, and thereby will they discern between *truth* and *error*, and will love the one, and hate the other.

Thirdly, You exhort, *That they keep themselves unspotted from the prevailing corruptions of these back-sliding times, &c.*

Answ. Concerning the times, many are ignorant; but this is certain at the present time wherein we are, is the Lord disquieting of men, and its the latter daies of *Antichrists* Reign

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and *Government*, that hath been in full force and *authority* for many generations, and *Babylon* that great City, her ruine is threatned, because of her abominations, that have been many and great, for the whole earth hath been corrupted (as it is written) and now the Call of the Lord is, that every man come out of *Babylon*, and deliver himself, that he may not partake of their plagues, and happy are they that are made clean and unspotted from her sins, that they may not be found covered with her *garments*, for the day of the Lord is come, and coming upon *Babilon*, and all *back-sliders* from God and his wayes. Now *Babilon* is that great City, which hath ruled over the Kings of the earth, and in her hath the blood of *Souls*, and of all *just men* been found.

Fourthly, You exhort *to endeavour a healing of these sad breaches and divisions which have been among us, &c.*

Answ. Now *the sad breaches and divisions* which is indeed at present in this Nation, cannot be healed, but as the cause and ground thereof be removed, which is the sins of *Rulers*, *Teachers*, and *People*; and this is the cause wherefore the Lord hath brought distraction amongst them: Oh what ambition and self-seeking hath been among the Rulers! What judging for gifts and rewards? what neglect of Mercy and Judgement amongst them? And oh how have they oppressed the poor, and trodden down the needy! and because thereof is the righteous God vexed? And oh what covetousness and greediness of gaine are the teachers guilty of! How do they preach for hire, and divine for money? How have they unreasonably caused men to be imprisoned, and their goods to be *spoiled* for *wages*, and *tythes*, and *hire*? Oh how hath *covetousness*, and *idolatry*, and *superstition* abounded amongst the *Teachers* in this *Nation*? Oh abominable hath been their sins, their oppressions, and self-seekings! and because of these things hath the Lord brought distractions amongst *people*, and the sins of *Rulers* and *People* cries for vengeance from the Lord, and till these iniquities be removed by repentance and forsaken the fruit and effect thereof shall never cease, but breach upon breach will the Lord make, till the *Rulers* and *Priests* repent them of their *iniquities*, Gods hand will be upon them both in Judge-

ment;

[illegible] for their take that divine for money, and preach for hire, and judge for rewards? Will the Lord make the Nation as heaps, and as a ploughed field? Therefore let all people repent of their iniquities, and return to the light of Christ in their own consciences, and become followers of the Lamb; and this is the perfect way of healing of all breaches [illegible] and errors.

You exhort to be diligent in the [illegible] and constant performances of [illegible] duties, &c.

Men must first be awakened and enlivened unto God, before they can act for God in holy duties; and as for duties performed in presence unto God traditionally, and without the teachings of the Spirit of God, is but idolatry; and the Nation is weary of such a Religion which they have received, and held traditionally, for thereby the Soul immortal cannot be nourished unto eternal life; and while you teach duties towards God, by that rule, while you teach praying, singing, repeating, expounding, by tradition and imitation, without the leadings of the Spirit of Christ in them, you do but teach idolatry, as long hath been taught in the Christian Nations, the doing and performing such and such things, as Christian duties and practises, and the forcing and compelling of doing such things upon people in the unregenerate state, and unconverted nature, this Religion and such performances of duties, have been of Babylon, and of Antichrist, and a cheat upon peoples Souls, whereby many have been deceived and lain in that great City, and the form of Godliness without the Power hath been practised, while duties have been performed unto God, without the teachings of the Spirit of God, and their consciences are blinded, and the Lord abhors their Sacrifices; and people must first come to feel the Word of God in their hearts to regenerate them, before they can perform any acceptable thing to God; and therefore do not teach people to be hypocrites; do not teach them such and such performances, in the corrupt state, without the teachings of the Spirit of God in their own particulars, for if you do, you make them but twofold more the children of the devil, and such du-

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tion performed in that nature, shall not cover nor hide from the Wrath of the Lord which is comming upon all *hypocrites*.

Sixthly, You exhort *that they would cause their children and servants to submit to* Catechisings, *and train them up in the reverence of* godly Ministry, &c.

Answ. It may be enquired into, what you mean by *cause them to submit*; how *cause them*? by force and imposition upon their consciences, by outward external personal punishment or threats? Is this your meaning? Will you set up *Religion* by *violence*? And must *children* and *servants* be compelled by *restraint* and *force*? This is not the right way to promote *Religion* and the *Worship* of God, nor to make *children* and *servants* truly religious; it was the *Beast that received power from the Dragon*, that *caused* all to *worship*, *both small and great, children and servants*; and this causing to *worship* was in the time of the *Apostacy*, when the true Church was fled into the *Wilderness*, and all the time ever since, hath *Nations* been *caused* and *compelled* to such and such performances, and practises of *Religion* and *Worship*, and such *causing*, I am jealous, your meaning is, whereby you would *force* and *compell* such manner of *worship* and *practises* upon people: And what do you mean by *godly Ministry*? Will you admit of just tryal according to the *Scriptures*, whether yours be that *godly Ministry* or no? for all sorts of *Christians*, *Papists*, and *Protestants*, and all *others*, they will say that they are in the *right way*, and their *Ministry is the godly Ministry*, but the fruits of many proves the contrary, and we cannot believe that yours is the *godly Ministry*, except you will prove it to us, by, and according to the *Scriptures*.

Now it is certain, that the *Ministry of the Apostles* was the true *godly Ministry*, and if yours agree with theirs, then we will confesse that yours is the true *godly Ministry*. Therefore tel us plainly, Do you agree with them in your Call, and in your Maintenance, and in your Practises, and in your Fruits and Effects, in your Lives and Conversations, and in your Doctrines? Are you justly according to?, and do

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you agree with the Apostles in all these things? Shall we lay you to the line, that you may be judged? This is but as a hint at things whereby you might justly be tryed, for if you agree not with the Apostles in these cases mentioned, then it is evident that your *Ministry* is not the true *godly Ministry*, but hereafter we may have a better occasion to try you: And thus the principal parts of your Exhortation is answered, and if you can, receive it in love.

TO all you *forty one Teachers in* London, *under whose hands your Exhortation passeth*: This I say to you, in the fear of the Lord God: Oh ye men consider! and let it enter into your hearts, the day of the Lord is at hand upon you, and account of your *Stewardship* must you give, and his reward must you have whom you have served, and you must reap the fruit of what you have sown: Oh look upon your flocks, and see what a condition they are in! Oh what pride and vain-glory is abounding amongst them! Oh how doth wickedness spring forth from them! Are they like unto sheep of Christs Fold? Or are not they appearing outwardly Christians, when in the evil nature is uncut down in them? Oh what wickednesse abounds in this City! What double-dealing and dissimulation? What lying, and swearing, and drunkennesse? Oh high are all the fruits of the flesh grown amongst your *Flocks*! Your *Vineyards* are not *dressed* as they ought to be, there is abundance of corrupt trees, and fruitlesse branches which cumbers the ground: Oh it makes the heart of the righteous sad to walk in the streets, and to view the *abominations* that are daily brought forth, by a people professing *Scriptures*, *Church*, *Ministry*, and *Christ*: Oh! it burdens the just, and grieves the righteous soul to consider

ſider how high iniquity is grown among the ſheep of your Paſtures, whom ye ſhould have fed with knowledge, and converted unto the fear of the Lord, had you been *meſſengers* ſent of God; the very *Jewes* and *Heathens* they blaſpheme againſt *Chriſt*, through the abominations brought forth among *Chriſtians*, that have the *name to live*, but are *dead*: Oh let it enter into your hearts, and ſmite you, that your many years *Miniſtry* ſhould have ſo little effect, for your *vineyard* is like untilled ground, unploughed, and unbroken up: Oh there is much hard-heartedneſſe amongſt your people, and their hearts goes after covetouſneſſe, even while they profeſſe God with their lips; Oh the righteous mourns in ſecret to ſee the prophaneneſſe, the ſcornings, and reproaches that are brought forth in your *City*: And oh the *idolatry* that abounds! let it repent you, that you have been ſo ſlothful, and never more ſeek the *fleece*, but ſeek the *flock* thats gone aſtray from the Lord, who is the true *Shepherd*, whoſe voice hath not been obeyed, *and many Paſtors have deſtroyed the Vineyard, and many Shepherds have fed themſelves, and not the Flock*: Oh conſider the day of the Lord is at hand, and he will viſit with his rod: *You* and your *Flocks* prepare to meet the Lord, for his Kingdome is nigh to come, which will be a terrible day to all workers of iniquity.

And as for this your *Exhortation*, I ſay, as for *Exhortation* in it ſelf, *Miniſters* ought to exhort their *Flocks*; ſo ſuch a thing in it ſelf I do commend, and not oppoſe, but when I had read and ſeriouſly conſidered the aim and intent of your ſpirits in your *Exhortation*, I found it ſecretly, and in a meaſure openly oppoſing, and ſtriking at, and ſecretly ſmiting the people of the Lord, whom you have reproached by the name of *Quakers*, who are dear to the Lord, and he careth for them, though you ſee no beauty in them, but accounteth them altogether vile, and in as much as you lifted up your hands againſt them, upon that account was it upon my ſpirit to return ſomething in anſwer, for the *information* of many, that they might be undeceived, and not in envy towards any,

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me in love to all, to both you and your people, and you have occasioned this upon your selves, though you are reproved: and not as a man of strife or contention have I proceeded, but as one that desires the further *manifestation* of truth, and that no false accusation may rest upon it, which you have secretly brought forth, with which the Lord is not well pleased, that you should set your selves in opposition against his people; and if any of you shall receive a just reproof and repent, it may prove to you an advantage of much good, and be not so proud as to say in your hearts, *What art thou, weak man, that reprovest us? or wherefore art thou so bold thus to deal with us?* but rather fall under just reproof, for in uprightnesse of heart have I proceeded towards you, and not in mine own, but in the will of the Father: And oh that your *Flocks* would also consider, among whom there are many that are *zealous* in their way! Oh that their *Zeal* and *Judgements* were guided by the Spirit of the Lord, then should it be well with them! Oh that they would be *meek* and *humble*, and learn the fear of the Lord! Oh that every one of them would consider, and turn from their iniquities, and become followers of *Jesus Christ*, then should the glory of the Lord be revealed unto them, and peace, and truth, and righteousnesse should be unto them, and their Families, and their City, if they would come into Covenant with God, and be taught of him, and be exercised by his Law in their hearts, then should the countenance of the Lord be upon them, and then should they discern between truth and error, between the *Ministers* of *Christ*, and *Deceivers*. Oh! there is a pity for many poor people, which are *zealous* in their way of Religion, without knowledge, and they think they do God good service, while yet their consciences are not exercised by the Spirit of the Lord, but a false spirit that rules and leads, and many holds the truth in unrighteousnesse, and they know not but they do well: Oh that such would consider, and not be hasty in any thing to performe or professe Religion in their degenerate estate, but that they

would come to know the Regeneration, and the renewing of their minds by the Holy Spirit, and that the Immortal Birth might be born in them, even the Birth of the Spirit which is Heir of God: Oh that that might live and rule in them, then should they be Heirs of God, and *Citizens* of the *New Jerusalem*. And oh ye people of *London!* lay it to heart, *you must be born again*, or else you can never enter into Gods Kingdome, *you must be changed in nature*, and must be crucified to this world, that you may live unto God, this must you come unto, or else you have no part nor portion in eternal life; all your *duties* and *performances* in your *forms* of *Religion* they cannot save you, nor justifie you, all your *preaching*, *praying*, *singing*, and all your *duties* whatsoever, they are all nothing, till you come to know *changing and renewing inwardly*, and do witness the Seed of God raised up in you, and the head of the Serpent bruised in you by the Seed of the *Woman*, this must you come to witnesse, that your souls may live: Oh that you would consider! be not so *zealous* against that which you may call *Heresie* and *Schism*, for while you erre in judgement, you may soon speak evil of *truth*, and persecute it under the name of *error*; many have wofully fallen into that snare, and brought sorrow upon themselves thereby: The wise *Jewes*, even the *chief Priests*, *Scribes*, and *Pharisees*, they were confident in their way, as you can be, and yet they *erred* in *judgement*, and would not receive Christ, but persecuted him, under the very name of a *Deceiver*; and thus it is possible for many to do in this age: What though you have *Christs* words, and the *Apostles* words; yet if you have not the Spirit of *Christ*, that was in the Apostles, you know nothing rightly of the Scriptures, neither can you understand them, nor have Salvation by them, for you must know Christ in you, your hope of glory, else you are reprobates, and shut out of the Kingdome of God: And search the Scriptures, and see if they do not witnesse this: Do not they say, *Christ is in you, except you be Reprobates*? and do not they say, *The Law of God is written in the heart, and the Spirit of God is put in the inward part*? And do not they say, *That Christ hath lightened every man that comes into the world with the true light*? And do not they say that the Apostle

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postle exhorts people to hearken *to the Word of God in their hearts, and to be followers of the Spirit of God, that was in their hearts?* And do not the Scriptures say, *That it was the light that shined in the heart, that gave the knowledge of God unto the Saints?* Search the Scriptures, and see whether these things be so, and must not men be *born again of the immortal seed?* Oh consider, and let not these doctrines seem *new* unto you, neither reject them, though they come unto you in weak appearance, *not with words of mans wisdome, but in simplicity, and in sincerity, and in the Power of God:* And search the Scriptures whether these things be so; were not they false Prophets *that preached for hire, and divined for money, and sought for their gain from their quarter?* Were not such deceivers in the true Prophets time, and them that preached for filthy lucre, and for money, and for gifts and rewards? were not such false Brethren, and false Apostles? Search the Scriptures whether these things be so, for the day of tryal is now come, wherein all must be searched, and that *Religion*, and *Worship*, and *Ministry*, which is not according to the Scriptures, which was given forth by the *Spirit of God*, let that *Religion*, *Worship*, *Church*, and *Ministry* be utterly condemned of the Lord, and all his *people*; and let such *Ministers* as cannot prove their *call*, their *maintenance*, and *practises*, to be according to the *Scriptures*, let such *Ministers* be confounded, and silenced for ever, and come to try this matter when you will. For whereas you cry out against us, as if we were deniers of *Scriptures*, as if we were enemies to *Church*, and *godly Ministry*, and *Religion*, and as if we were *Deceivers*, *Hereticks*, *Papists*, &c.

But I say unto you, these things have you never yet justly proved against us, but rather accused us behind our backs, to make us odious among people; and though for divers years together we have been *publike*, yet when did ever any of you *Ministers* seek by lawful means to convert us, or shew us our errors, if we were as you say of us, oh it had been your time to have sought our conversion! and not to have persecuted, to have sent to prisons, houses of correction, and by such weapons of an outward force and cruelty have you dealt with us, and not in meekneſſe, and by the Spirit of the Lord, as *Ministers* of *Christ* ought to do; but hath cried to the *Magistrates* to defend you and

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your Church, and worship, being unable, as it were, by the Authority of Gods Spirit to defend your selves? Therefore I say unto you now, lay down your *carnal weapons*, and come out in the *Spirit of meekneſſe*, and come out in the Authority of Gods Spirit, if you have it, convince us thereby, if we be in an evil way, as you say, let us hear your founded arguments by the Spirit of God, and according to the Scriptures, to prove those things which you lay of us; prove it by evident arguments, that we deny Scriptures, and that we are *Heretickes*, and that we are *Papists*; I challenge you all in the Name of the Lord, even all your *Ministers of London*, let us hear your found reasons openly in the *spirit of meekneſſe*, and do not *back-bite* nor *slander* in the dark, neither let us be bawled againſt by your rude members, as often we have been, even in the spirit of wickedneſſe; but come out *you Ministers*, we are willing to be tryed according to the *Scriptures*, and by the *Spirit of God in our Election, and in every part of it*; and if you be the same, then come forth in *the spirit of meekneſſe, like Ministers of Christ*, and lay down your carnal weapons, and let us have fair dealing openly, that *truth* may be manifested publikely, and *error* may be discovered; and let us not envy one anothers perſons, & seek to destroy one anothers lives, but let us seek to destroy the evil in one another, that men might be saved; and this would be a *Christian-like* way, we would hear what you have to charge againſt our Religion, by found arguments in meekneſſe, that we may answer it, and then we will charge something upon your *Ministry, Church, Religion*, and *Worship*, and we will prove what we lay againſt you, according to the Scriptures; and we will not impoſe our *Religion* upon you, by the force of *outward Powers*, and *outward Lawes*, neither would we have you force *your Religion, Ministry*, and *Church* upon us, by such means, but we will leave the effect of all things to the Spirit of God, and come out when you will in such a way as this, and this would satisfie thousands, and let meekneſſe and the fear of God be amongſt you, and this is the way to exalt *Religion*; and we would think it a happineſſe, more then otherwiſe, to be joyned in ſober debate and diſpute againſt you, that you and we, in *your Religion, Church*, and *Miniſtry*, and in *ours alſo*, might be *tryed* according to the

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Scriptures, that all may be ſatisfied who are doubtful, and may hear *your principles*, and *our principles diſcuſſed*, in the preſence of the people, who may judge by the light and witneſſe in their own conſciences, for to that in all we do appeal; and in ſuch a proceeding, come forth when you will; lay down *your carnal weapons*, and take the *weapons of the Spirit*, and come to the tryal, *for the day of the Lord is approaching upon all the world.*

THE END.